Provider name: Leeds Arts University
UKPRN:10003854

Leeds Arts University Provider Submission TEF 2023

1. Provider context

Leeds Arts University has been delivering education in creative subjects since its foundation as the Leeds School of Art in 1846. It transferred to the Higher Education sector in August 2011, was awarded Taught Degree Awarding Powers (TDAP) in September 2016 and gained University title in August 2017. The period 2018-22 saw the University confidently establishing itself as the only independent, specialist university of creative arts in the north. The University's curriculum profile is therefore firmly within the design, creative and performing arts categories and the University is a member of the GuildHE mission group. The University's mission statement is:

"We are an influential, world-facing, creatively driven specialist arts university where professional educators, practitioners and researchers collaborate to develop and enable excellence.
We promote distinctive, critically informed and relevant practice in order to support the economic growth and cultural advancement of individuals and society."

The University's Strategic Plan (2017-2023) articulated values that define and guide its decision-making and behaviour. These are;

- Student-centred - maximising potential, nurturing talent, respecting individuality, holistic
- Focused on specialist creative communities - collaborative, interactive, multi-disciplinary, studio-focused, externally engaged
- Critical in our thinking - aspirational, challenging, researching, questioning, analytical, innovative, independent-thinking
- Professional - relevant, contemporary, ambitious, achieving, international, employable, entrepreneurial, networked with industry
- Progressive - beautiful, unconventional, risk-taking, experimental, radical, responsive,

It is in inculcating these values, which support both creative and professional growth that defines the educational gain the University seeks to provide its students in order that they may thrive academically, professionally and as members of society.

The University's strategic plan defines 3 aims which characterise how this can be achieved;

- To provide student-centred teaching and learning in a studio and practice-based environment which nurtures excellence, leads to graduate success, and supports economic growth and artistic enrichment.
- To continue to develop and progress relevant research practice which enhances teaching and learning, is globally significant and contributes positively to society
- To consolidate our reputation as an influential specialist arts university, collaborating with external partners to support student success and cultural advancement.

The University's higher education provision is delivered at its Blenheim Walk Campus. A site that has expanded to match the increase in provision, the latest phase of which was a £22 million extension completed in 2019 which saw the creation of further specialist music, film and photography studios, design studios, classrooms and a dedicated careers section.

In 2021, the University enrolled 2148 full-time undergraduate students. The undergraduate portfolio for the period 2018-22 is outlined in Table 1.

Provider name: Leeds Arts University
UKPRN:10003854

Table 1: Student numbers by course and level of study.

BA/BMus (Hons)	2018/19				2019/20				2020/21				2021/22			
	L4	L5	L6		L4	L5	L6		L4	L5	L6		L4	L5	L6	
Textile Design	62	80	83	225	68	61	77	206	37	65	60	162	44	34	63	141
Fashion Design / Fashion	47	50	37	134	60	43	46	149	51	52	39	142	47	48	52	147
Fashion Branding	29			29	37	23		60	50	35	22	107	53	46	33	132
Fine Art	114	113	67	294	110	100	109	319	97	99	97	293	85	86	97	268
Visual Communications	53	51	33	137	50	53	51	154	49	45	54	148	51	48	44	143
Popular Music Performance	16			16	18	15		33	13	18	14	45	21	13	16	50
Creative Advertising	27	33	24	84	26	25	32	83	19	25	23	67	19	19	25	63
Photography	59	50	48	157	69	55	45	169	66	61	53	180	64	57	58	179
Fashion Photography	48	19	21	88	48	44	19	111	45	49	43	137	48	42	47	137
Filmmaking	43			43	50	36		86	47	46	31	124	31	41	42	114
Graphic Design	82	64	64	210	75	75	66	216	73	72	73	218	67	65	69	201
Illustration	78	67	57	202	83	73	63	219	75	76	69	220	76	68	71	215
Comic & Concept Art	55			55	71	49		120	88	60	49	197	86	81	58	225
Animation	37	33	27	97	39	37	34	110	32	35	31	98	40	26	33	99
				1771				2043				2157				2148

The period 2018-22 was one of planned expansion for the University with an additional five undergraduate courses being established, bringing the total to fifteen. Undergraduate student numbers grew by 21.3% during this period.

The University delivers a small amount of Further Education in the form of a Foundation Diploma in Art & Design, a post-level 3 qualification enabling progression to specialist undergraduate studies, and a Level 3 Extended Diploma in Creative Practice, a post 16 alternative to A 'levels also aimed at progression to undergraduate studies in creative subjects. Both qualifications are awarded by the University of the Arts, London. From an annual completing cohort of around 300 students about a third progress internally, the remainder choosing to study further afield or progress to employment. The University's Further Education provision occupies its original School of Art building a short distance from the University's main campus.

1.1 Student Profile

HESA data for 2021 shows undergraduate students at the University were mostly white (81%), female (75%), under 21 on entry (91%) and IMD Q3,4 & 5 (59%). The proportion of black and ethnic minority students was 9%. A significant proportion (26%) disclosed a disability. Although these proportions fluctuated slightly over 2018-22, they remained broadly similar. A number of sustained actions to address the experience and outcomes of under-represented groups were developed and implemented over the period as part of the University's Access and Participation Plan (APP). These are referenced at the relevant points in this submission. An updated APP was submitted to the OfS in July 2022 and notification of approval was received in November.

1.2 Staff Profile & Organisational Structure

The senior manager for undergraduate provision is the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Student Experience & Resources. They are supported by two Undergraduate Directors who between them manage the University's Undergraduate Course Leaders and take an overview of curriculum matters. The role of Course Leader has responsibility for the organisation and management of a course which includes line management of a course team of Senior Lectures and Lecturers. Courses are resourced according to student numbers and so staff team size varies accordingly. Course Leaders are all full-time, permanent posts. Course teams are made up of permanent posts of 0.2 or above with most posts (70%) 0.6 or above. Staff on fractional posts typically sustain a parallel personal professional creative practice adding a further valuable external perspective enabling close links for students between their learning and current practices. This structure, blending full and part-time staff in a coherent, organised manner supports the realisation of a professional and academic creative community which assists in developing student belonging and aiding strong continuation and completion rates.

1.3 Learning Environment

It is the ethos of the University that students develop knowledge, skills and understanding through participation in a collaborative creative learning culture. Each course has a 'home' with an environment aligned with its creative industry (e.g., fine art and design studios, music recording and practice suites, film studio and edit suites, and photographic studios). Course teams and their offices are located within these discrete areas enabling frequent formal and informal exchanges between students and staff and there are informal working spaces outside course areas to encourage collaboration between courses. Whether through directly working together, working in a shared environment or in the proximity of different creative disciplines, students benefit from this inspiring networked community. The ability to collaborate and learn from others is key to successful learning and onward career development.

Supporting these course 'homes' are central workshops and facilities including extensive creative computing facilities, printmaking, 3D process workshops, shared photography and film studios. These resources are independently staffed by subject specialists and offer intra, co- and extra-curricular opportunities for students to work across courses. Students are instructed in the use of these facilities and resources by the staff who manage them and can access them independently. They receive further guidance as their projects develop and as circumstances allow. This inter-dependence amongst the creative disciplines, the relationship between studios and workshops, between technical and academic and the culture that is formed as a result helps establish the relationships and ways of working that are later to be found in students' professional world.

1.4 Enhancement Planning

To support the aims of the Strategic Plan the University has a Learning, Teaching and Enhancement (LTE) Plan (2017-23) (Source 1: LTE Plan) organised around seven themes:

1) Support and engage our students. *We aim to ensure our courses of study and the learning environment reflect the specialist nature of learning and teaching and encourage imaginative approaches to learning and teaching*.
2) Improve assessment and feedback. *We aim to ensure that assessment tasks are designed to allow students to demonstrate their achievements and are clearly linked to the courses'*

learning outcomes. Feedback to students will be timely and will inform and assist their future learning.

3) Support enhanced approaches to technology in learning and teaching. *We aim to provide a high quality learning environment including the provision of, and support for, appropriate new technologies as both learning and professional development tools*.

4) Develop the curriculum to further embed professional engagement and employability. *We will expand the opportunities to engage with employability and enterprise activities, enabling students to secure high level work and developing the skills of those with entrepreneurial ambitions.*

5) Inspirational teaching informed by research. *We will ensure that all teaching is responsive to and informed by research, professional practice and scholarship. We will ensure that all our students have personal experience of practice-based research through individual and/or collaborative discipline related work.*

6) Develop our international and global reach. *We aim to collaborate with external partners nationally and internationally to create opportunities for students to learn in diverse cultural, professional and educational environments and extend our global reach.*

7) Support staff development in learning and teaching. *We aim to provide academic staff with the stimulation, support, mentoring and resources to continually develop as teachers, ensuring that staff maintain a close understanding of emerging pedagogic developments.*

Progress towards the LTE Plan aims is reported regularly through the University's committee structure (Source 2: LTE Plan Updates 2018-22) and frames many of the specific initiatives highlighted in this submission. The LTE Plan articulates with other University strategies and policies, In particular the University has sought convergence with its Access and Participation Plan activities to ensure a strong emphasis on equality, diversity and inclusion within its education practice.

Qualitative evaluation features prominently in the University's assessment of its performance and consequently in this submission. This addresses the matter of critical mass at sub-group levels or when considering intersectionality and the resulting statistical uncertainty when employing quantitative methods. However as indicators, quantitative data has prompted further investigation, this submission specifies the actions and intended outputs that followed from these starting points.

2. Student experience

2.1 Teaching, feedback and assessment

2.1.1 Summary Indicators: Teaching, Feedback & Assessment

The overall indicator for teaching is 1.5% below benchmark and suggests very high quality, with the indicators for most groups comparable. Satisfaction with teaching is highest amongst male students (+1.4%). Measurement of satisfaction according to ethnicity suggests Asian students may be least satisfied (-3.9%). The rating for students with a disability is 0.4% above benchmark and the rating for IMD Q1&2 is -3.2%.

The overall indicator for assessment and feedback is 2% above benchmark and also suggests very high quality, with the indicators above benchmark for most groups. Measurements of satisfaction with teaching according to ethnicity are variable showing Asian students to be 2.9% above benchmark, Mixed ethnicity students -4.6% and Black students -1.6%.

Cognisant of this, the University has undertaken considerable work in researching the needs of under-represented groups specifically to address developing pedagogy including qualitative research projects and internal conferences around inclusivity that are described in more detail in this submission (Section 2.2.1), together with the development of its staff.

2.1.2 Analysis of students' free-form NSS and YSS responses.

The University administers Your Student Survey (YSS), a mirror of the NSS, to Level 4 & 5 students (see 2.7). For 2020-21 a simple content analysis (Source 3: NSS/YSS 2021/22 content analysis) of the positive free-form student responses in the NSS/YSS involved categorising and coding according to pre-determined themes. Responses could be categorised against more than one theme.

The content analysis shows that the aspects of the university academic experience most frequently cited positively by Level 6 students (NSS 2021-22, n=346) were learning resources (32.1%), teaching/curriculum (29.2%), academic support (26.0%) employability (16.8%) and staff (15%). For Level 5 students (YSS 2021-22, n=92) the aspects most frequently cited were: teaching/curriculum (42.4%), learning resources (37.0%), academic support (30.4%), employability (17.4%) and assessment and feedback (16.3%). For Level 4 students (YSS 2021-22, n=120)) the aspects most frequently cited positively were teaching/curriculum (56.7%), learning resources (32.5%), assessment and feedback (24.2%), academic support (23.3%) and staff (20.1%). Examples of these student comments are used selectively in appropriate sections of this submission.

2.1.3 Studio-based learning

A statement outlining the institution's approach to pedagogy (Leeds Arts University, 2022) is reviewed and adjusted each year and is maintained on the University's website as part of its approach to providing comprehensive information to students about teaching and learning and meeting the expectations of the Consumer Markets Authority (CMA).

While the exact nature of student-centred, studio-based learning varies by course, overall the approach involves active engagement with learning in a strongly collaborative environment. Students learn through working on various briefs, problems or projects which range from specific problems set for an individual timetabled session through to ongoing experimentation and creative work in response to the overall Module Brief. Some studio sessions will be more teacher directed, including lectures and seminars, while others will open sessions for students to work alongside each other with tutors acting in support. Studio-based learning helps nurture students' sense of belonging on their course and the development of strong identities for course cohorts and is the foundation of the University's strong continuation and completion (Section 3). Alongside scheduled teaching sessions and open studio time, creative arts students work independently and collaboratively with their peers on their creative practice and research. This emphasis on student-led independent and collaborative work increases as students progress through the three years of their degree.

2.1.4 Curriculum structure

All students follow a suite of modules unique to their course, an aspect of course structure designed to build strong course cohorts and belonging. Modules are typically 30 or 60 credits. Larger modules enable a more integrated and holistic approach to creative practice; theory,

technical skills development and creative practice mutually inform each other. Some courses include only 60 credit modules, with students studying a single module each semester. Others include a mix of 30 and 60 credit modules, typically transitioning to 60 credits for the final year. No student will study more than two modules at any one time, but increasingly they are studied sequentially. For example, two 30 credit modules will be studied one after the other in one semester rather than in parallel. The combination of larger modules and sequential, or 'block' teaching is a purposeful aspect of the University's approach to inclusive curriculum design, helping to manage the cognitive load placed on students, whilst maintaining the appropriate academic challenge. This is particularly important for the growing numbers of students with mental health conditions and neurodivergent students, but as a mainstreamed inclusive approach it promotes success for all and gives further rise to achieving strong completion and progression rates (Section 3).

- "The course avoided cluttering the term with separate research and practical work, by combining them in a way that feels more natural and effective." – Level 6 Animation Student, NSS, 2021-22
- "Really engaging and well planned, have the chance to explore many areas and have freedom in the way I work" Level 4 Photography Student, YSS, 2021-22

2.1.5 Assessment and feedback

Strong student satisfaction with assessment results arises from a whole-institution approach. Assessment is holistic in that, for summative assessment, students demonstrate their learning through submission of a single portfolio of work, in response to the Module Brief, at the end of each module that they study. Portfolios typically include a combination of resolved creative work, critical engagement with context and further evidence of and critical reflection on the process of learning and making. Students are supported toward final module submissions by the teaching and learning activities on their modules, formative assessment at mid-points on all modules and, as typical for creative arts pedagogy, regular critiques (crits) where students and tutors give and receive feedback on work in progress. In the wake of receiving Taught Degree Awarding Powers (TDAP) in 2016, in collaboration with a sector expert in creative arts pedagogy, the University invested in the development of a creative arts focussed, evidence-informed approach to assessment (Kleiman, 2017). This became the Creative Arts Learning Model (CALM). CALM consolidates the assessment principles outlined above and introduced a common language for assessment criteria and grading descriptors. After being successfully piloted and evaluated during 2017-18, the model has been rolled out in a staged approach as courses have gone through periodic review. By 2021-22 all courses were following the CALM model. More recently the University collaborated in a QAA funded multi-institutional enhancement research project around improving belonging through assessment in the creative arts, collaborating with colleagues at University of the Arts London and the Glasgow School of Art (Hill et al., 2023) and insights from this work will continue to enhance the University's approach.

In parallel, a University Assessment Review Process (ARP) had primary focus on enhancing the quality and consistency of assessment briefs across the University. This process included the development of a common template for briefs and the establishment of a cross-university panel to review briefs and related student-facing module documentation. A particular area of activity of the panel was ensuring consistency and simplicity in language and terminology, for example as used to describe different component parts of student portfolios and submissions. This practice contributed to improved assessment literacy for students, as shown by strong, above benchmark levels of agreement with the assessment and feedback NSS questions. The introduction of an in-

year exam board at the end of semester one in 21/22 also contributed to improved satisfaction with feedback by providing students with a definitive picture of their progress to date.

- "This course doing weekly crits has been good for seeing where you're up to and how others are doing, I think it's a good chance to get feedback and know what you're doing to find strengths or weaknesses." – Level 4 Comic and Concept Art Student, YSS, 2021/22
- "... the assignments set are engaging and thought provoking." – Level 4 Fashion Photography Student, YSS, 2021/22
- "The tutors on my course are really supportive and are good at giving feedback that helps me improve." – Level 6 Fashion Branding with Communication Student, YSS, 2021/22
- "Lots of opportunities in 3rd year to choose the brief that you are actually interested in which makes the module more enjoyable." – Level 6 Graphic Design Student, YSS, 2021/22

2.1.6 External Examiner Comments

External examiners overseen by a Chief External Examiner provide key evidence as to the quality of teaching, feedback, assessment and the structure of the curriculum. External Examiners act independently and impartially, providing informative comments on standards and quality as well as student achievement. An internal review of external examiner reports received for undergraduate courses between 2018-19 and 2021-22 (Source 4) confirmed that the University consistently maintains high academic standards set for its awards and that the assessment process measures student achievement rigorously and fairly against intended outcomes. Student achievement and the course outcomes were confirmed for 100% of courses.

External examiners offer commendations of existing practice alongside recommendations for ongoing improvements. All courses received commendations in each academic year between 2018-22.

In 2018-19 commendations included:

- "The students receive a very high standard of teaching and every opportunity to learn…The students are encouraged to reflect on their learning and to plan forward at all times. The work is well underpinned by professional and contextual modules."   (BA (Hons) Animation)
- "[The course] is considerate of the changing needs of the student cohort in terms of the employability/professional practice agenda, and more particularly in meeting the skills needs of entrepreneurial arts practitioners who will need to be flexible, reflective, and reflexive as they develop their portfolio careers." (BA (Hons) Fine Art)

 In 2019-20, commendations included:

- "The relationship between the application of assessment and the design, structure and workload of the course follows a clear pattern of progress through the course." (BA (Hons) Fashion Photography)
- "Feedback was constructive and appropriate to each level, including examples of good practice, for instance graduate advice for Level 6 students and technical advice for progressing students." (BA (Hons) Textile Design)
- "The well-considered curriculum fosters excellent research and development skills which subsequently enable students to understand the importance of this as the foundation for the ideation process."   (BA (Hons) Creative Advertising)

In 2020-21 commendations included:

- "The engagement with industry through both new and well-established relationships with advertising agencies and individual practitioners, remains as in previous years, at a high level and has provided students with valuable opportunities." (BA (Hons) Creative Advertising)
- "… the research and development elements are strong as I have come to expect from this course, with examples of students having to go out of their comfort zones in regard to research into different time periods, outfits and environments; this is to be applauded." (BA (Hons) Comic and Concept Art)

In 2021-22, commendations included:

- "The level of reflection in the highest performing students, even as early as level 4, is exceptional and it is also present in those who are underperforming. It is clear that this reflection and positioning is at the core of the course…" (BA (Hons) Visual Communications)
- "…it is clear that [the students'] work has benefitted from collaboration with other creative degrees, such as photography – this is unusual across the sector." (BMus (Hons) Popular Music Performance)
- "I am impressed at the broad range of skills and knowledge the students have and the breadth of delivery offered to them." (BA (Hons) Fashion Branding with Communication)

2.2 The contribution of research to an outstanding academic experience.

The period 2018-22 saw the University strategically developing its research activity in preparation for a submission to the Research Excellence Framework (REF) for the first time in 2021-22. The University submitted all HE staff (above 0.2) on a teaching and research contract to the REF rather than just those staff with significant responsibility for research. This demonstrated a commitment to the evolution and development of the University as a specialist institution for practice-based research in the arts, and in recognition of how the University sees excellence in teaching and excellence in research as mutually reinforcing.

Within the context of the University, research is investigating; rediscovering or making an original contribution to knowledge in a chosen specialist field of study/practice that is open for scrutiny through peer review. The overall aim of the research at the University is to enhance students' learning through staff engagement in their own research practices. Submissions were made to two units of assessment, Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory; and Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies.

During 2018-19 and 2019-20, as part of their annual research proposal, staff were asked to articulate the impact their research had on their teaching practice. These open text, qualitative statements of impact were analysed using the themes outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Thematic analysis of staff statements regarding relationship between research and teaching activities (2018-20)

Form of Impact (theme)	Staff responses 18-19 (n=70)	% of staff responses 18-19	Staff responses 19-20 (n=92)	% of staff responses 19-20
Teaching methods and curriculum design	20	28%	32	35%
Teaching subject knowledge	18	26%	27	29%
Teaching research skills	12	17%	17	19%
Teaching technical skills		4%	13	14%
Widening participation in the arts/inclusive teaching		4%		3%

(Source 5: Internal report - Engagement with Research by Undergraduate Staff).

The data shows that staff reported their research impacted on teaching most commonly through teaching methods and curriculum design and often this linked to activity related to periodic review and new course proposals. Impact on the subject knowledge being introduced to the students, and on the teaching of research skills were next most frequently mentioned. Changes in the teaching of technical skills and the linking of research to widening participation were also cited as impacts.

Course teams explain the relationship between teaching and research within periodic review documentation and events. Examples from the period 2018-22 include:

- "Staff developed practical workshops delivered for the Brighton Illustration Fair, which focused on discovery-based learning and play theory. This informed the development of workshops to introduce relief printmaking explorations at Level 4. After contributing to an international symposium, staff research into data visualisations of sublime gothic landscapes informed the development data led exploratory briefs at Level 5." (BA Illustration, 2020-21).
- "The research activities of the course team are invested in the teaching delivery which includes from fashion Illustration and drawing, exhibiting skills, digital technologies, fashion sustainability and fashion artefacts." (BA Fashion Design, 2021-22).

Together, this evidence conveys the multi-faceted positive relations between research and teaching practice within the University.

2.2.1 Research to enhance the student experience

In 2018-19, the University commissioned a research project to explore minoritised ethnicity students' experiences of the University (Bale et al., 2020). The outcomes and ongoing impact of this research offer a substantial case study of how the University has embedded research and student engagement into its ongoing enhancement activity and illustrates the strategic convergence of our access and participation and learning and teaching enhancement work (Source 6 : Internal report – Research to enhance the student experience.).

The research sought to investigate possible reasons for low participation and gaps in continuation, satisfaction and degree awarding between home undergraduate students of minoritised ethnicities and their white counterparts. Through the research, the University wanted to understand, for example, whether low numbers were inhibiting development of a sense of belonging and leading to withdrawal (e.g., Thomas, 2012).

_____ postgraduate students of minoritised ethnicities were recruited and trained as paid research facilitators, primarily to create a safer space for conversations with their undergraduate peers. Using a Community of Inquiry approach enabled the emergence of research questions that participants themselves deemed most relevant. 17 students participated across six focus groups of approximately 90 minutes. The findings and recommendations were received through the University's committee structure, published in an academic journal (Bale et al., 2020) and disseminated at four sector events. Discussion with the Students' Union regarding the interpretation and, where appropriate, collaborative realisation of recommendations has been maintained throughout.

Recommendations were further realised through an institution-wide Learning, Teaching and Enhancement (LTE) conference in June 2021, with 52% of staff in attendance and 18 members of staff contributing papers or presentations (Source 6: Report, see also 2.4 below). The conference took Decolonising the Curriculum as its theme and created a permanent virtual multimedia collaborative resource including glossary, relevant reports, events, and research. The conference represented a key impact, integrating the original research findings into cross-institutional discourse, signalling prioritisation by senior leadership and eliciting active, reflective discussion about race and culture. As of 31/12/22 the resources associated with this conference continue to be accessed by staff and students with 3,817 different engagements with the materials in total (Source 7: Conference VLE Site Engagement Statistics).

Impacts of the conference on practice were identified through a follow-up survey (May/June 2022). 21 staff responses (13% of the figure attending) highlighted that the conference had increased awareness of the topic and practice on other courses; provided resources and inspiration to challenge delivery methods; prompted review of materials and bibliographies, research into a wider range of creative practitioners, changes to content, and collaboration with local communities; informed periodic review processes; and aided discussions with students seeking to engage in creative practice with themes and structures outside of Western European value systems. Concurrently, active review of teaching and learning materials occurred at course level which fed into the Annual Course Evaluation process.

Following the conference, a further impact on student academic experience came through the library engaging with staff and students to achieve greater representation in the collections and curriculum, addressing the diversity of resources available and the discoverability and use of these resources in the curriculum. The University's main gallery also exhibited artists from a wider range of ethnicities.

In June 2022 the work was further embedded through a second LTE conference themed around the Inclusive University. The event showcased many of the actions undertaken following the previous year's conference. 39% of staff were in attendance, with 16 contributing papers or presentations. Student engagement in the event resulted in conference submissions and talks in partnership with staff; a pre-conference speaker event; and an exhibition of 18 students' creative work responding to the conference theme on display as part of the day.

Building on research conducted in 2018-19 a new longitudinal research project launched in 2021-22. This aims to further understand awareness and perceived impact of measures to improve participation rates and diversify the academic learning environment, as well as explore the ongoing

student academic experience. Ultimately, this is intended to iteratively identify and hone appropriate academic support measures, especially where students' perceptions relate to how they and their work is understood and assessed. It is expected that the impact of these activities will become visible through the next TEF period.

2.3 Professional Practice and Employer Engagement

Employer engagement and the embedding of authentic, professional practice based academic experiences are key to the University's students achieving positive outcomes (Section 3). These are designed-in through the development and review of courses and their curricula, and by building such engagement into students' ongoing academic experiences through, for example: live briefs, visiting professional talks and inculcating professional working practices within the studio.

The University appoints external academic and industry-based members to serve alongside internal panel members on its Course Approval and Periodic Review Panels. Through these panels, the external members contribute to the design, approval and review of courses in order that they are informed, relevant and aligned to national academic and industry requirements. Across 2018-22 the University conducted 10 Periodic Review events and one new Course Approval (Creative Writing).

Examples of comments received from external industry-based panel members include (Source 8: Internal report – External panel members):

- "The new integrated structure reflects industry practice effectively by adopting a holistic approach blurring the lines between context, professional and practical skills mirroring the integration of services offered by advertising agencies in which the roles are less constrained to specific activities… Students will benefit from working within this environment that fosters flexibility and creative thinking which in turn will enhance employability." (Industry-based panel member, BA (Hons) Creative Advertising)
- "Emphasis on collaboration within the course and with industry partners, the strong external engagement is also highly valuable to students in terms of both 'real world' insight and network building. Maintaining industry recognition with recognised bodies whilst also delivering consistently high results for satisfaction in the National Student survey suggests that the course is balancing both the academic and professional worlds." (Industry-based panel member, BA (Hons) Graphic Design)
- "This is an innovative programme, one that stands out in its field for the simplicity of a course structure that is very flexible and focused on students' goals." (Industry-based panel member, BMus (Hons) Popular Music Performance)
- "The course and curriculum provide a wide range of studies involving research, conceptual work to final product providing students with a thorough integrated knowledge of product creation. Industry expectations are addressed through design briefs and challenges students to take in different approaches to the design process." (Industry-based panel member, BA (Hons) Fashion Design).

Employer engagement is embedded in course delivery and student learning throughout and is also supported through university-wide initiatives co-ordinated by our Careers, Employability and Enterprise (CEE). Examples of activity include live briefs, projects, competitions, portfolio crits, visiting professional talks, industry speakers and workshops. A dedicated Employability Week at Level 5 augments the course specific provision. CEE support is offered for 5 years after graduation.

Continuous employer engagement and partnerships development ensures that the University can call upon the skills, knowledge and experience of creative practitioners, artists and professionals to deliver unique and highly tailored workshop experiences to students and graduates.

Examples of live briefs (see also 3.3) include:

- BA (Hons) Creative Advertising (2022) with *Square* digital marketing agency. Students were tasked with developing a campaign that sought to explore opportunities and credentials around social justice and minority ethnicity in the financial sector;
- BA (Hons) Textile Design (2018-22) long-standing partnership with regional employer *Hallmark* with students tasked to design greetings and gift product ranges with the most successful designs being put into production.
- BA (Hons) Fashion Design (2022) working with alumnus and honorary graduate Rav Mathuru's *Cloth Surgeon* on a brief for high end bespoke tailoring solutions to be put into production for a concept range.

The Visiting Professional (VP) speaker programme is timetabled and embedded within courses. During 2018-22 the University arranged 961 visiting professional talks. VPs were early, mid-career and established practitioners and all spoke with students about their own creative journeys, sharing insights into salaried employment, self-employment and portfolio careers. In 2021-22 over 20 online speakers from Europe, Asia, Africa, and North America provided international insights and shared different cultural experiences (Source 9: CEE Student Engagement Data 2018-22).

- "I think the course has helped me gain a better understanding of the industry and how to apply what I know and can do in a working environment. I enjoyed engaging with professionals and gaining insight on their personal journey." – Level 4 Graphic Design Student, NSS, 2021-22
- "Visiting professional talks were really insightful. Careers fortnight: motivational and reassuring." Level 6 Fine Art Student, NSS, 2021-22
- "This is the first time in education where it feels someone has taken me seriously when I say what I want to do for a living. Staff are open and transparent with their industry experience which is helpful and there's been a lot of good guidance." Level 5 Comic and Concept Art Student, YSS, 2021-22
- "I like receiving live briefs from outside sources as I feel that this generally does mimic the outside world." – Level 5 Textile Design Student, YSS, 2021-22

2.4 Staff Professional Development for Excellent Academic Practice

2.4.1 Staff Professional Development

As outlined in the University's CPD Framework, all employees have access to a comprehensive induction followed by continuing support and development throughout their employment. The induction is linked to a 12-month probationary period. On completing probation staff participate in the Annual Performance Review (APR) which has 100% completion rates. The APR includes a review of individual teaching practice, discussions against role competencies and University values; a review of the impact of any staff development that has been undertaken, including Peer Review of Teaching, and identification of future development needs. Starting with effective identification of need, the CPD framework ensures an appropriate match of provision to the

development needs of staff; the evaluation of the impact of provision; and the effective dissemination of good and successful practice. The University strongly encourages activities which seek to enhance the learning experience of students by improving the quality of their teaching and learning support in Higher Education. The provision of CPD allows staff to develop skills and competencies progressively, enabling them to build on and reinforce their existing skills and expertise as required to deliver excellent teaching and academic support for students. Designated academic development days are scheduled in the University calendar in June and September each year, although activities also occur throughout the year.

Throughout 2018-22 the University has had a high and growing proportion of academic teaching staff with a teaching qualification. HESA rounded data shows the University's proportion of academic staff (teaching and research) with a teaching qualification grew from 65 of 80 staff in 2018-19 to 85 of 95 staff in 2020-21 (Source: HESA Staff Data Table 10). Between 2018 to 2022 the proportion of HE academic staff with UK Professional Standards Framework recognition has ranged between 68% and 83% (Source 2: LTE Plan Update 2018-22). Newly appointed staff who do not already have UKPSF recognition were supported toward achieving this within a given time frame. Going forward the University is planning to introduce an in-house PGCert in Teaching & Learning in Higher Education from 2023-24.

The University's transition to Taught Degree Awarding Powers included an enhanced emphasis on the higher qualifications of staff, both at appointment and through supporting existing staff towards higher awards. This runs in parallel with recognising and developing those appointed with strong industry/professional backgrounds who are supported to achieve higher level awards where appropriate. The proportion of the University's HE academic staff with a doctorate grew from 10 of 85 staff to 25 of 95 staff between 2018-19 and 20-21 (Source: HESA Staff Data Tables 8/10).

2.4.2 Embedding excellent academic practice through HE Peer Review 2018-22.

The University has a well-established Peer Review of Teaching scheme. The scheme enables staff to critically reflect upon their own and others' teaching practice, and through the process of sharing and critical dialogue contribute to the further improvement of the student learning experience . The scheme includes all academic teaching and workshop staff. Academic staff are paired with colleagues from different courses, and workshop staff with colleagues with different technical specialisms. The scheme plays a key role in spreading practice between different disciplines, and in developing the overall community of practice within the University.

The scheme has a high level of positive engagement from staff with the percentage of completed reviews currently at their highest level (2018-19: 77%, 2019-20: 61%; 2021-22: 86%) (Source 10: HE Peer Review Progress reports, 2019-22.) Engagement during 2019-20 was impacted by the onset of the pandemic, and it was decided to suspend the scheme for 2020-21 as part of a range of measures designed to allow staff to focus on the front-line student experience during that period. A refreshed scheme for 2021-22 has received a very positive reaction from staff and engagement has been enhanced beyond pre-pandemic levels.

Completed peer review reports are subject to a simple thematic analysis each year (Source 10). Points reported through the continuous evaluation provide evidence for how staff engagement in the scheme supports an excellent student academic experience:

- Completed reports confirm that the process of reviewing the teaching and broader educational practice of colleagues is prompting staff to reflect on and consider changes to their own practice. This helps to validate peer review as a collaborative activity with learning derived from observation, review and dialogue.
- Completed reports also offer a rich insight into the main pedagogic practices of the University and many common issues that are grappled with. For example: ways of establishing a trusting and supportive classroom climate; questioning strategies for engaging students in reflection, critique and discussion; the power of inter-year tutorials and the integration of active learning into more formal taught sessions all recur across the records of observed sessions.
- The accounts of observed sessions are suggestive of a strong institutional culture of dialogic pedagogy. Much of this emerges from the central position of crits and peer reviews within the teaching and learning process, but even within large group briefings and lectures it is evident that staff are designing and convening sessions which are overall characterised more by student engagement and interaction than information transmission.
- Supporting this culture, reviewers' comments highlight how well staff know their students, and that a supportive learning climate has been developed in the classroom/studio. Many staff are commended for specific skills in active listening and in questioning which are key for successful dialogic pedagogy.
- There is evidence of innovation in practice and of variety in teaching approaches across courses.
- In terms of surfacing, sharing and embedding excellent practice, the process enables what has been learned through peer review to be shared within course team meetings.

2.4.3 Learning Teaching and Enhancement Conferences

In addition to support for qualifications, peer review of teaching and other initial and continuing professional development, the value an annual institutional learning and conference to further develop and embed excellence in academic practice was recognised. Drawing on wider sector experience of such events, an initial plan for a first conference was developed during 2019-20 but deferred for a year due to the onset of the pandemic. The first two conferences were successfully held in 2021 and 2022, both with a broad focus on inclusivity (see 2.2.1 above). Planning for a 2023 conference themed around employability and enterprise is underway. Strong student engagement in the delivery of the event was achieved, for example through including the Students' Union President as a member of the planning group. The events provide a space where the University community can share, reflect on and evaluate learning, teaching and assessment practices and ideas, enabling cross-institutional learning and contributing to ongoing development of excellent academic practice and enhancement of the student academic experience.

2.5   Academic Support

2.5.1 Summary Indicators: Academic Support

The University's overall indicator for academic support is 0.6% above benchmark and suggests very high quality, with the indicators for most groups of students comparable. Satisfaction is highest amongst male students (+3.4%) and lowest amongst female students (-0.4%) Measurement of satisfaction according to ethnicity suggests all groups are above the benchmark. Students declaring a disability have a rating of 2.3% above benchmark whilst those who do not are at the benchmark.

The University aims to nurture a community where students and staff engage in creative partnerships that foster learning and development in an inclusive and supportive way. Tutorials are timetabled at key points within the year and offer students the opportunity to discuss their general progress across all modules. Students can raise any questions or issues that relate to their studies and discuss their grades, summative (final) feedback and intended areas of focus as well as any pastoral or support issues that may have arisen. Students are normally assigned to a specific tutor for these tutorials. Allocations for individual tutorial time are specified in staff resource models, conveying that this form of academic support forms a core part of teaching and learning.

Group critiques (crits) provide an opportunity to receive formative (developmental) feedback on work to date. They are tutor led sessions that usually involve smaller numbers of students presenting their work for discussion and critical feedback on its strengths and areas for improvement. Group crits also help develop skills in presenting, discussing and evaluating students own progress as well as feeding back on the progress of other members of the group.

Formal formative assessment is built into all modules, with students receiving individual tutorials and feedback on work in progress to inform final submissions. This also forms a valuable point for monitoring student engagement.

- "My tutors have made the experience of uni incredible and I am so pleased to have had them throughout the years. They have supported us well and I have felt as though I could communicate very easily with them." – Level 6 Illustration Student, NSS, 2021/22
- "Interactions with tutors are a positive one, they make time for everyone, and push your ideas." Level 4 Graphic Design Student, NSS, 2021/22
- "I have been challenged and prompted to do more, which has resulted in my practice improving." – Level 5 Fine Art Student, YSS, 2021/22

2.5.2 Specialist academic support

As outlined in Section 1.1, 26% of students (2020-21) have declared a disability, in particular reflecting the high prevalence of neurodivergence among creative arts students, staff and practitioners. The academic support team deliver in house one to one support to disabled students and those with specific learning differences. Support tutors have a background in the creative arts or continue their own creative practice. Employing creatives within this role enables them to support the academic development of students through having a clear understanding of what it means to be a creative and the pressures and sense of achievement studying a creative subject entail. Course tutors also work in collaboration with academic support team at other stages when the appearance of a need emerges.

- "The support team were the most amazing aspect of the year, the welfare team helped with struggles within and outside of university, academic were very helpful in helping me form a learning support plan and applying for a DSA. Made me feel heard."

2.6 Learning Resources

2.6.1 Summary Indicators: Learning Resources

The University has consistently invested heavily in its learning resources. The overall indicator for satisfaction is 6.3% above benchmark and suggests outstanding quality, with the indicators for all groups at least 2.5% above benchmark. Whilst statistically uncertain, satisfaction is highest amongst black students (+31.1%) and lowest amongst Asian students at +2.5%.

In 2019 the University won the student-voted WhatUni Student Choice award for Facilities and was also placed 2nd in 2018 and 6th in 2020.

2.6.2 Specialist Workshops

An analysis of students' freeform text comments within both the National Student Survey (NSS) and the institutional Your Student Survey (YSS) (Source 11: Analysis of NSS/YSS Comments about Learning Resources, 2018-22) shows that across the four years specialist workshops received 142 commendations: 20 in 18/19 (NSS only); 21 in 19/20; 32 in 20/21 and 69 in 21/22 (of which 31 were in NSS). Feedback was from students on a wide range of courses.

Comments included:

- "Leeds Arts University – had incredible workshops which enable a wide variety of students often with no previous experience to get involved. The workshop staff are able to advice [sic] and help on almost any project. We were also given quick inductions in to all the workshops in first year – but my favourite part of the course was the sign-up inductions given in second year. These were invaluable as we were given the opportunity to go to some really in-depth workshops." – Level 6 Fine Art Student, NSS, 2018-19
- "The technicians have been amazing." – Level 6 Fashion Design Student, NSS, 2019-20
- "The facilities are very impressive, there are so many workshops to choose from, enabling students to be very experimental using different approaches." – Level 6 Graphic Design Student, NSS, 2019-20
- "The technicians are incredibly helpful and are very happy to help out and explore different ideas and film setups." - Level 5 Filmmaking Student, YSS, 2021-22
- "Ample supplies and workshops/materials are available and allow you to freely be creative within Art and Design." – Level 6 Textile Design Student, YSS, 2021-22

2.6.3 Academic Computing and Learning Technology

Enhancing approaches to technology in learning and teaching is one of the seven themes of the University's current Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Plan (2017-2023). The period under consideration included the rapid transition to online teaching and learning support during the Covid-19 Pandemic and the return to predominantly campus-based provision. Students and staff were supported through this transition by a range of measures. The use of a Virtual Learning Environment (eStudio) has undergone significant development during the period 2018-22, including an external review conducted by JISC. Overall engagement continues to grow. Student submissions are now managed entirely online.

2.6.4 Library

All students are introduced to the library at induction. The library contributes to an outstanding academic experience through institutionally tailored collections and resources, with a particular strength in user-driven collection development and engagement, engendered by a close-knit creative community and evidenced in consistently high student feedback scores in the NSS.

Library collections are responsive to curriculum and user needs, combining subject specialist resources with successful work undertaken to develop reading list toolkits and diversification projects which engage users and ground acquisitions strategies in sectoral and critical discourse. In addition, the libraries house the institutional Special Collections and Archive for primary research. Digital provision includes the implementation of a new library Discovery layer, specialist content and resources (including academic databases, moving image and industry-level trend forecasting services), and the integration and indexing of the University's institutional repository for greater visibility. Usage of the CLA Digital Content Store has also ensured digitised resources are copyright compliant, consistently presented, and accessibly formatted for users. Library collections are enhanced by promotion and engagement: exhibitions and thematic displays foreground the unique positioning of Library Services alongside Curation at the University. Engagement extends to library guides and workshops on core academic skillsets such as reference management and search strategies, as well as guided encounters with specialist collections.

2.7 Student Voice.

2.7.1 Summary Indicators: Student Voice

The overall indicator for student voice is 2% above benchmark and suggests very high quality, with all but one group above benchmark. Satisfaction is highest amongst male students (+5.7%) and lowest for those 21 to 30 years old (-2.5%).

2.7.2 Student Engagement

Student engagement within Leeds Arts University takes several forms. All students are automatically a member of Leeds Arts Union. Students have opportunities to express their views on the curriculum, facilities and their environment through the Student Representative system and wider consultations which the Union facilitates. The Union Executive meets with the Vice Chancellor and Pro-Vice-Chancellor 3 times a year. Course team meetings with student representatives from each level are held 3 times a year and identify and monitor actions taken to improve the course and the student experience. All student representatives are invited to meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies for their course twice a year. Student engagement is also embedded within the committee structure and the course approval and review process (see 2.7.1)

At the end of all modules, students are encouraged to give qualitative written feedback on their modules in response to two questions: "What worked well?" and "What could be improved?" Responses are anonymous to encourage frank answers and are analysed and considered within annual module and course evaluations. An institutional Your Student Survey [YSS] mirrors the questions of the National Student Survey (NSS) and has been administered to Level 4 and Level 5 students annually since 2019/20. The University's ongoing research into the student experience is conducted in partnership with the student body (see 2.2.1).

- "... they are very proactive on student feedback and make sure to hear everyone's voices." Level 6 Visual Communication Student, NSS, 2021-22
- "There's a clear sense that student voices are important and will be listened to." Level 6 Fine Art Student, NSS, 2021-22
- "Staff are open to feedback and constructive criticism and are actively improving the course based on feedback from students." Level 5 Comic and Concept Art Student, YSS, 2021-22

2.7.3 Analysis of Student Engagement in Deliberative Committees, Course Approval and Review

Between 2018 and 2022 there was student representation on the following formal committees: Board of Governors; Academic Board; Undergraduate Quality and Standards Committee (UGQAS); Higher Education Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Committee (HELTE); Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee; Sustainability Committee and the IT Infrastructure Advisory Group. Student Representatives for the UGQAS and HELTE Committees were nominated by the student body via the Students' Union. The Student Representative on the Academic Board is an ex officio position of the Students' Union President. The Students' Union President and a Students' Union elected governor serve on the Board of Governors.

Attendance of student representatives at Academic Board was high (Source 12: Report on student engagement in deliberative structure), with only one absence from a meeting of the Board during 2018-22, an attendance rate of 92%. The attendance of student representatives at other committee meetings was varied, with representatives attending five out of ten (50%) of HELTE Committee meetings held over this period, with apologies received for four out of five absences. Student representatives attended four out of six (67%) UGQAS Committee meetings (2020-22). Students attended the predecessor of the UGQAS Committee, HEQAS Committee, seven out of nine (77%) times in the 2019/20 and 2018/19 academic years.

Students contributed to discussions as part of their membership of University Committees. Some illustrative extracts from relevant Committee minutes are ("SRep" refers to the Student Representative, "SUPres" refers to the Students' Union President):

- "The Committee discussed the successful transition to blended delivery of teaching, and SRep agreed that students had adapted well to the changes implemented by the University to support their learning. The Committee agreed that this should be further reflected upon in the action plan update. It was also agreed that the update should reference the positive work undertaken by course teams during the Periodic Review process to diversify the curriculum." UGQAS Committee, 4 November 2020.
- "SRep raised the possibility of an internal review point for students half-way through the academic year, so that changes could be implemented before the end of each year. The Committee discussed this, noting the University encourages ongoing communication between students and their tutors, for example via Course Board meetings held throughout the year." HELTE Committee, 28 October 2020.
- "[Undergraduate Director] noted that consultation with students on the course had been largely positive. SUPres commended [Undergraduate Director] and the course team for its interaction with students." Academic Board, 13 March 2019.

The University's Periodic Review process had engaged with students in all instances of the process being conducted in the past four academic years. During 20-21 and 21-22 the Periodic Review panels included the President of the Students' Union as a panel member. The rate of attendance for student members of Periodic Review Panels is 100%. During each event, a group

of current students from the course under consideration was interviewed by panels. For the three 2021-22 Periodic Reviews the Panel interviewed groups of   students. Specific data for the numbers of students interviewed is not available for years prior to this but, of the seven panels that sat in 2019-21, four of these interviewed students from all three levels of the courses, two interviewed students from Level 5 and 6, and one interviewed students from Levels 4 and 5. Comments from students feed into the ongoing development of the course.

3. Student Outcomes

The student outcome measures according to the data indicators suggest that overall continuation and progression rates are of very high quality whilst completion rates are outstanding.

3.1 Continuation and Completion

3.1.1 Summary Indicators: Continuation and Completion

The overall indicator for continuation is 2.4% above benchmark, with the indicators for all groups, where available, above the benchmark. Closest to the benchmark are students who declared a disability (+1.4%) and highest above benchmark are students from ABCS Quintile 1 (+7.3%). The largest group (female) was 2.5% above their benchmark.

The overall indicator for completion is 4.1% above benchmark, with the indicators for all groups, where available, all over 2.5% above their benchmark. Highest above their benchmark are students from ABCS Q1 (+7.2%) and closest to their benchmark are black students (+2.6), though there is least statistical confidence for this group. The largest group (female) was 3.8% above their benchmark.

Continuation and completion rates are strongly influenced by the 'sense of belonging' that is fostered amongst the student community (Thomas, 2012). It is through the strategies outlined in the student experience section of this submission, the support provided by academic, resource and support staff and the learning environment that is created, that this sense of belonging is achieved.

3.2 Progression

3.2.1 Summary Indicators: Progression

Progression into graduate employment in the Design, Creative and Performing Arts has an indicator across all providers of 65%. There is a strong proposition that securing graduate employment in creative disciplines is a longer-term process than measured by the Graduate Outcomes survey and often involves a portfolio approach to careers development whereby part-time and free-lance work grows over time to become the greater part of a graduate's income. A JISC report commissioned by the University shows that in 19/20, 28.6% of graduates were either self-employed, freelancing or working on a creative portfolio (Source 13: Leeds Arts University – labour market analysis, 2022)

The overall indicator for the University's progression is slightly higher than the national indicator at 65.5% but 0.5% below its benchmark. Closer analysis of the time period indicators shows that for the 17-18 graduating cohort the indicator was at the benchmark, and for 19-20 the indicator was

2.2% above benchmark. The biggest gap was for the 18/19 cohort, those who were surveyed in the autumn of 2020, at 4.4% below benchmark.

This was a period of high COVID impact, which also saw the benchmark value fall by 1.4%. The following shows the data at course level over the 3 years for courses with graduating cohorts;

Table 3: Progression rates for Graduating Cohorts, 17-18 to 19-20

Course	17/18	18/19	19/20
BA (Hons) Animation	72%	77%	74%
BA (Hons) Creative Advertising	90%	62%	81%
BA (Hons) Fashion	55%	24%	80%
BA (Hons) Fashion Photography		50%	64%
BA (Hons) Filmmaking			100%
BA (Hons) Fine Art	67%	51%	56%
BA (Hons) Graphic Design	84%	81%	82%
BA (Hons) Illustration	62%	62%	64%
BA (Hons) Photography	67%	43%	65%
BA (Hons) Textile Design	67%	64%	67%
BA (Hons) Visual Communication	56%	64%	72%
Undergraduate overall	**68%**	**60%**	**69%**

The table demonstrates the difficulties in that specific period for disciplines that are entirely freelance or commission-based (i.e. Fashion Photography, Photography, Fine Art) during a period of frequent lockdowns and severe working practice restrictions. Also, a seismic impact is notable on the BA (Hons) Fashion course (falling by 31%). In all cases 'bounce back' improvements in progression rates can be noted for the following year. Outside of these cases progression can be seen to be consistent or notably improving.

Review of socio-economic groups shows that according to IMD and FSM (eligibility for free school meals) data suggests the University is broadly in-line with the benchmark whilst that of ABCS Q1 is 5.3% below benchmark. The University has a number of initiatives seeking to support costs for students in hardship that are outlined in its Access and Participation Plan. It has also extended its research and activities in inclusive practices in teaching and learning which are described in the student experience section of this submission. It is anticipated that the high levels of continuation and completion for this group will assist improved progression rates over time.

3.3 Educational Gain.

As described in the contextual background introduction of this submission, the University has identified educational gain as attributes related to creative and cultural values that are inculcated in its students and as defined in its strategic plan. This is part of building and sustaining a community of practitioners, to form individuals who become, as a process of their learning experience - collaborative, externally engaged, independent-thinking, ambitious, responsive, innovative, analytical, questioning, relevant, entrepreneurial, networked with industry. Whilst the expression of some of these values appear intangible, they frame the graduate attributes students are supported to develop.

The gains are realised and evidenced through the outputs students produce for their exhibitions, performances and screenings. These take place across the University in multiple modes including in-year and end of year, local, regional, national and international events. Projects are often linked to industry/commercial briefs and feature creative professionals as input or alongside.

Evidence of such student successes are celebrated on the Universities website and examples are reported at each Board of Governors meeting.

Most prominent are the annual end of year public exhibitions and performances at which all completing students showcase their work. Ordinarily this occurs across the site in the course studios which become dedicated to this. It acts as the culmination and celebration of their educational experience and a springboard into their next steps. In both 19/20 and 20/21 however due to the rules imposed by government in response to the pandemic these events moved online with each student submitting work for an online show with links to their own web pages. In addition, a printed catalogue was produced featuring work of all the students who submitted, as a permanent record.

The impact of the pandemic on a learning culture based on the model above was profound. Satisfaction levels in the year in which the NSS was last completed as the first lockdown in March 2020 was announced was higher than the benchmark in all categories and better than the previous year. The drop the following year in all categories was sharp and below benchmark in all but one (learning resources). Whilst, as with most in the sector, the transition to online learning was managed highly successfully and in some cases brought benefits, (greater access to international speakers for example) being denied the regular formal and informal opportunities to network and share with staff and other students on-site dramatically affected their perceptions of their experience. The University's Your Student Survey (YSS) of Level 4 and Level 5 students, which whilst not offering split-metrics, confirmed for the cohort moving from Level 4 in 19-20 to Level 5 in 20-21 this drop in satisfaction.

The move to online methods also included careful and assiduous work to rework the curriculum to preserve the academic infrastructure so that students had the opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding in order to demonstrate and achieve learning level outcomes. This, along with recognition from the government that those without access to resources themselves could continue to learn on-site, obviated the need for 'no-detriment' policies to be introduced. Whilst this helped ensure academic standards, the NSS rating for assessment and feedback dropped sharply and comments against it strongly suggested some students wanted greater compensations to be applied. It is encouraging to observe that this rating rose sharply in year 4 and above benchmark again.

3.4 Student Success

Courses are encouraged to promote and share examples of student successes in an external context. In total 302 instances were reported and featured on the University website in the four academic years of the TEF (Source 14: Student Success Overview 2018-22). The categories of activity recorded are diverse and include instances of students winning competitions/awards, exhibiting work, attending workshops delivered by prominent visiting speakers, responding to briefs set by industry, securing creative residencies with prominent agencies, internships or placements, having work published, receiving press coverage for their work and collaborating with industry.

Of the recorded activities, 97 of these were from the 2021-22 academic year, 87 from 2020-21, 56 from 2019-20 and 61 from 2018-19. Of the activities recorded in the 2021/22 academic year, the three courses with the most activities were BA (Hons) Creative Advertising with 24, BA (Hons)

Textile Design with 16, and BA (Hons) Photography with 9. The rest were from a variety of other courses. Previous years' activity also includes a spread of courses, with activities recorded for 13 courses in 2020-21, 11 courses in 2019-20 and 9 courses in 2018-19.

11 out of the 13 current undergraduate courses which provided examples had students win external industry awards for their work at some point in the previous four academic years, with 92 such awards recorded. Of these, 30 were from the 2021-22 academic year, 33 from the 2020-21 academic year,   from the 2019-20 academic year and 19 from 2018-19. The courses whose students received the highest number of awards were BA (Hons) Creative Advertising (22), Textile Design (18) and Animation (12). Examples of awards received include BA (Hons) Creative Advertising students receiving commendations at the D&AD New Blood awards, BA (Hons) Fashion Design students being recognised at Graduate Fashion Week, and BA (Hons) Textile Design winning awards from the Bradford Textile Society.

Ten undergraduate courses which provided examples had students respond to an 'Industry brief' as part of their studies at some point in the previous four academic years. These industry briefs are set by companies or organisations who operate in industries relevant to the course for students to respond to. There are examples of these resulting in paid internships, publication of work, and other benefits to the successful students. A few of these are included below as examples:

- During 2018-22 a long-standing live brief for BA (Hons) Graphic Design students with *Something More* brand design studio, contributing to four graduates gaining subsequent employment with the studio.
- In 2018-19, 12 Leeds Arts University students were chosen to design artwork for the walls of a new building of a prominent UK law firm.
- In 2021-22, in response to winning a brief set by a London based advertising agency, BA (Hons) Creative Advertising students were given one-to-one mentorship from the agency's Executive Creative Director.
- In 2020-21, a Level 6 BA (Hons) Illustration student was commissioned by Leeds City Council to create and install a public art work as part of a regeneration project.

Eleven undergraduate courses which provided examples had students who presented or attended events or exhibitions external to the University, with 55 examples of this being recorded over the previous 4 academic years. In 2021-22, students showcased their work at New Designers 2022 (BA (Hons) Textile Design), Graduate Fashion Week 2022 (BA (Hons) Fashion Design), Thought Bubble Comic Art Festival (BA (Hons) Comic and Concept Art and BA (Hons) Illustration), and Leeds Literature Festival (BA (Hons) Creative Writing).

As well as indicators of educational gain, these instances are key elements of a supportive structure that aids employability, increasing student confidence and enabling access to wider audiences and direct engagement with employers. Generating these activities has been through a mixture of centrally developed events but also a result of the University's general, supportive culture of encouraging and celebrating external engagement. Considerations of the TEF model has led to the recognition that this area should now be subject to a more formal strategy involving named leads in course teams whose role is to co-ordinate, monitor and develop these activities with the support of the central CEE team. This role will include reporting through the Annual Course Evaluation process and providing more structured evidence for future TEF assessments.

4. References

Bale, I., Broadhead, S., Case, K., Hussain, M., and Woolley, D. (2020). 'Exploring the black, Asian and ethnic minority (BAME) student experience using a Community of Inquiry approach', Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning, 22, 1: 112-131.

Hill, V., Broadhead, S., Bunting, L., da Costa, L., Currant, N., Greated, M., Hughes, P., Mantho, R., Salines, E. & Stevens, T. (2023) Belonging through assessment: Pipelines of compassion, QAA Collaborative Enhancement Project 2021

Kleiman, P. (2017) "We Don't Need Those Learning Outcomes": assessing creativity and creative assessment. In Elkington, S. & Evans, C (2017 eds.) Transforming Assessment in Higher Education: A Case Study Series pp21-29. AdvanceHE: York.

Thomas, P.L. (2012). 'Building student engagement and belonging in higher education at a time of change: Final report from the What works? Student retention and success programme', July 2012. [Online]. Available from https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/What_works_final_report_0.pdf [accessed: 29 November 2022].

Sources of Evidence

HESA Open Data Table 8 Table 8 - HE academic staff by HE provider and highest qualification held 2014/15 to 2020/21 | HESA

HESA Open Data Table 10 Table 10 - Number of teaching staff in England, Wales and Northern Ireland by HE provider and teaching qualification marker 2014/15 to 2020/21 | HESA

Leeds Arts University (2017) Strategic Plan 2017-23: https://www.leeds-art.ac.uk/about-us/governance/the-universitys-strategic-plan/

Leeds Arts University (2022) Undergraduate teaching and learning at Leeds Arts University: https://www.leeds-art.ac.uk/media/1483791/undergraduate-teaching-and-learning-at-leeds-arts-university.pdf

Other internal documents and reports cited in this submission (Sources 1-14) have been collated and are available for inspection and verification.